

Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh **le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk **

Tha mo smuaintean air na h-Innsean an t-seachdain seo, agus na dùthchannan làimh riutha air gach taobh – Pakistan agus Bangladesh. Tha deagh adhbhar ann airson sin. Aig an àm seo, o chionn deich bliadhna fichead, thòisich an cogadh a thug neo-eisimeileachd do Bhangladesh.

Goirid ro mheadhan-oidhche air a’ chòigeamh latha fichead dhen Mhàrt, naoi ceud deug, trì fichead ’s a h-aon-deug (1971), thòisich saighdearan à Pakistan an Iar, a bha suidhichte ann am prìomh bhaile Phakistan an Ear, Dhaka, air losgadh air a’ mhòr-shluagh. Ged a thug e beagan mhìosan, b’ e sin a’ mhadainn fhuilteach air an do rugadh Bangladesh mar dhùthaich neo-eisimeileach.

’S iomadh latha fuilteach a bha anns na dùthchannan sin thairis air an eachdraidh, agus feumaidh sinn aideachadh gu robh Gaidheil an sàs ann an gu leòr aca. Am measg an fheadhainn a b’ ainmeile a bha thall, a’ sabaid as leth Bhreatainn, bha Sir Eachann Rothach, duin-usal Gaidhealach a bhuineadh do Ros an Ear. B’ esan am mac a bu shine aig Uisdean Rothach à Taigh an Fhuamhair, faisg air Bail’ Eoghainn.

Ann an seachd ceud deug is trì fichead (1760), dh’fhalbh e air ceann Reiseamaid nan Gòrdanach a dh’ionnsaigh nan Innsean. Còig bliadhna as dèidh sin, bha e aig ceann feachd Companaidh nan Innsean an Ear, a rinn an gnothach air arm mòr Innseanach ann am batail ris an canar “Batail Bhuxar”. Tha feadhainn a’ cumail a-mach gum b’ e sin a’ bhuannachd a bu chudthromaiche a-riamh aig na Breatannaich anns na h-Innsean.

Rinneadh fèill mhòr air Eachann nuair a thill e dhachaigh. Chaidh e an sàs ann am poileataics, agus chaidh a thaghadh mar bhall-pàrlamaid do “Bhailtean Inbhir Nis.” Ach cha robh e deiseil anns na h-Innsean. Thill e ann an seachd ceud deug, trì fichead ’s a h-ochd-deug (1778) don cheann a deas, far an d’fhuair e ceannas air an arm ann am Madras. Arithist, bha e soirbheachail ann am batail, a’ cur na Frangaich a-mach à Pondicherry agus a’ gabhail baile Negapatnam thairis bho na Duitsich.

Nuair a thill e dhachaigh, chuir Eachann iomhaigh mhòr chloiche an àirde air mullach cnuic faisg air Taigh an Fhuamhair. Tha i na mac-samhail air geatachan Negapatnam agus tha i fhathast ann an-diugh, is ann an deagh òrdugh, dà cheud bliadhna as dèidh a togail.

Ach cha deach leis an Rothach anns a h-uile dòigh anns na h-Innsean, agus bha e aig ceann feachd ann am batail eile, anns an do rinneadh call air na Breatannaich a bha cho dona ri gin thall an sin. Thachair sin aig Polilur, pìos a-mach à Madras, ann an seachd ceud deug is ceithir fichead (1780) nuair a bha dà fheachd Bhreatannach a’ feuchainn ris a’ chùis a dhèanamh air arm Mhysore.

Bha ochd mìle saighdear fo smachd Albannach eile, an Coirneal Baillie, agus chaidh am marbhadh gu lèir, ged a bha feachd an Rothaich dìreach beagan mhìltean air falbh. Thuir feadhainn gur i a' Ghàidhlig a bu choireach airson na thachair, leis gum b' fheàrr le Eachann agus Baillie conaltradh ri chèile anns a' chànan sin, agus gun do dh'adhbharaich sin mì-thuigse eadar iad fhèin is oifigearan eile. Tha e a cheart cho coltach, ge-tà, gur e dìth-mhapaichean agus dìth-bhrathaidh a bu choireach.

Co-dhiù, fhuair Eachann air ais a Mhadras, ged a chaill e mòran saighdearan air an rathad. Thill e a dh'Alba agus dh'fhàg e aon rud eile mar dhìleab dhuinn – an cleoc a tha fhathast anns an stiopall ann am meadhan baile Inbhir Nis. 'S iomadh co-fhoghar dhen chleoc sin a chomharraich làithean mòra thall 's a-bhos. Nam measg bha neo-eisimeileachd Bhangladesh o chionn deich bliadhna fichead.

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Faclan na seachdainne: na h-Innsean: *India*; neo-eisimeileachd: *independence*; fuilteach: *bloody*; Sir Eachann Rothach: *Sir Hector Munro*; duin-ualas: *gentleman*; Ros an Ear: *Easter Ross*; Uisdean: *Hugh*; Taigh an Fhuamhair: *Novar (estate)*; Bail' Eoghainn: *Evanton*; Companaidh nan Innsean an Ear: *The East India Company*; Batail Bhuxar: *The Battle of Buxar*; Bailtean Inbhir Nis: *Inverness Burghs (a parliamentary constituency no longer in existence)*; mac-samhail: *likeness*; mì-thuigse: *misunderstanding*; dìleab: *legacy*; stiopall: *steeple*.

Abairtean na seachdainne: na dùthchannan làimh riutha air gach taobh: *the countries next to them (na h-Innsean) on each side*; feumaidh sinn aideachadh gu robh Gaidheil an sàs ann an gu leòr aca: *we must admit that Gaels were involved in many of them*; am measg an fheadhainn a b' ainmeile a bha thall: *among the most famous of those who were over there*; dh'fhalbh e air ceann Rèiseamaid nan Gòrdanach: *he left at the head of the Gordon Highlanders*; gum b' e sin a' bhuannachd a bu chudthromaiche: *that that was the most important victory*; rinneadh fèill mhòr air Eachann: *a big fuss was made of Hector*; chaidh e an sàs ann am poileataics: *he got involved in politics*; far an d'fhuair e ceannas air an arm: *where he obtained command of the army*; chuir X iomhaigh mhòr chloiche an àirde: *X put up a large stone monument*; ann an deagh òrdugh: *in good condition*; anns an do rinneadh call a bha cho dona ri gin: *in which as great a loss as any was made*; chaidh am marbhadh gu lèir: *they were all killed*; leis gum b' fheàrr le X agus Y conaltradh ri chèile anns a' chànan sin: *as X and Y preferred communicating with each other in that language*; dìth-mhapaichean agus dìth-bhrathaidh: *a lack of maps and a lack of intelligence (ie information from spies)*.

Puing ghràmair na seachdainne: 'S iomadh latha fuilteach a bha anns na dùthchannan sin thairis air an eachdraidh: *lit. it is many a bloody day that there was in those countries over their history. There is a tendency, among Gaelic learners, to always try to start a sentence with an active verb so that they might say, "Bha iomadh latha fuilteach anns na dùthchannan sin..." Bear in mind, however, that the assertive verb "is" is commonly used in idiomatic Gaelic to commence a sentence and try this out as often as you can, especially when you are talking, as here, about a large number or quantity. Here are other examples: 'S iomadh rud a chunnaic mi (it is many a thing I have seen); 's iomadh turas a chuala mi an leisgeul sin (it is many times I have heard that excuse); 's iomadh duine a lean am Prionnsa gu Cùil Lodair (it is many a man who followed the Prince to Culloden). And, in the Litir: 'S iomadh co-fhoghar dhen chleoc sin a chomharraich làithean mòra thall 's a-bhos: it is many a chime of that clock which marked great events (days) in all parts of the world.*

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine: Tha deagh adhbhar ann airson sin: *there is a good reason for that.*

* *“Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh” is funded by Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig*